



Guide to programme evaluation

Primary Years Programme

Middle Years Programme

Diploma Programme

Guide to programme evaluation

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Introduction

Programme evaluation in the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme is both a requirement of and a service provided by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) for its authorized schools. The main purposes of programme evaluation are:

- to assess the implementation of the programmes in each school
- to assist the school in developing and maintaining dynamic programmes that reflect the philosophy and the programme standards and practices of the IBO.

Programme evaluation is not a re-authorization of the school. It allows the regional office to work closely with the school in its ongoing development of the programmes; it is also an opportunity for the IBO to ensure on a regular basis that the standards and practices of the programmes are being maintained.

The IBO recognizes that its programmes are not static systems. They are essentially evolutionary, requiring adjustment and development in the light of experience. The IBO supports schools in all stages of development of the PYP, the MYP and the Diploma Programme by providing documentation, information seminars and professional development events. For the PYP and the MYP, there are organized visits by IBO staff and/or nominated, experienced practitioners.

Programme evaluation does not seek to appraise or assess individual teachers or students. It will be successful in achieving its aims only if a multiplicity of stakeholders is included: teachers, programme coordinators, administrators, students, parents, board members.

Programme evaluation occurs between three (3) and five (5) years after official authorization to offer the programme, and every five (5) years thereafter. It involves three important stages.

The self-study (PYP, MYP, Diploma Programme)

The important process of self-study, guided by a questionnaire, involves the whole school in its own assessment of its delivery of the PYP, the MYP or the Diploma Programme. The responses to the self-study should be the outcomes of discussions and of reflections on the evidence gathered in the process. For the PYP and the MYP, the self-study precedes the programme evaluation visit.

There is no mandatory on-site evaluation visit for the Diploma Programme, but in addition to the self-study, where necessary, the regional office may seek further information or organize a visit.

The school visit (PYP, MYP)

The programme evaluation visit is mandatory for all authorized PYP and MYP schools. It ensures the quality of programmes in IBO-authorized schools, while offering feedback to each school. The programme evaluation visit aims to be diagnostic and constructively critical, supporting the school's self-evaluation processes, informing the school's curriculum development activities, and assisting effective management and allocation of resources.

Programme evaluators are PYP or MYP practitioners selected by the IBO for their proven experience as teachers or administrators of the programme. They may be IBO staff members with particular responsibility for the PYP or the MYP.

The evaluation report (PYP, MYP, Diploma Programme)

The regional office will respond formally to the school—upon receipt of the completed self-study questionnaire in the case of the Diploma Programme, and after the programme evaluation visit for the PYP and the MYP—with commendations, recommendations and, where appropriate, matters to be addressed by the school.

The matters to be addressed are areas within a school's practice in an IB programme, which cause serious concern and which, if not addressed with some urgency, would endanger the school's standing as an IB World School.

Monitoring of assessment (MYP only)

Schools that have not requested IBO-validated grades for their students in the final year of the programme, thereby submitting to the process of moderation, are required to apply for monitoring of assessment in **at least one subject for each subject group and the personal project** within the **two years prior to the evaluation visit**. This involves sending samples of student work to the International Baccalaureate Curriculum and Assessment Centre (IBCA), showing a range of achievement. These samples should be taken from the final year that the programme is taught in the school.

Schools undergoing their first programme evaluation visit may not have reached the final year of the programme as they conduct their self-study and prepare for the visit. Details regarding monitoring of assessment in this very first programme evaluation visit need to be discussed with the regional office, which will provide appropriate guidance. In this case the process may involve submitting samples from earlier years of the programme.

Guiding principles

The following principles are observed by IBO programme evaluators when examining the school's self-study and supporting documentation, carrying out the programme evaluation visit and writing the subsequent report.

- The central purpose of the programme evaluation process and the subsequent report is to identify the strengths and the areas for improvement in the school's implementation of the programme, and to define what actions might be necessary. The evaluators aim to obtain a clear overview of how the school's implementation of the programme compares with the standards and practices of the IBO (contained in the document *Programme standards and practices*). The report will be evaluative, and will not attempt to prescribe—unless it is necessary to do so because the school's programme does not meet the required standards and practices. The report will not be speculative; it will be based on the school's self-study, the evidence provided and the observations of the team members.
- The report will be designed to assist management decisions within the school and to improve the implementation of the programme.
- The summary of the report will contain commendations, recommendations and matters to be addressed where appropriate. It will communicate clearly, and be consistent with the statements and judgments contained within the main body of the report.
- No individual will be named at any stage of the programme evaluation process. The performance of the teachers, either as individuals or as a group, will not be appraised.
- Individual students will not be assessed.
- In the case of the PYP and the MYP, the written programme evaluation report will be consistent with any oral report that may have been given to the administrators or other members of staff at the school at the end of the visit. The matters to be addressed and recommendations will be drawn directly from the evidence of the self-study questionnaire and the programme evaluation visit, and will not reflect any predilections of the programme evaluators.

The process

The first programme evaluation normally occurs:

- **For the PYP**—three (3) years after authorization
- **For the MYP**—four (4) years after authorization
- **For the Diploma Programme**—five (5) years after authorization.

The programme evaluation process is organized by the appropriate regional office of the IBO. For the Diploma Programme, the regional office contacts the school at the beginning of the school year, specifying the date when the completed self-study questionnaire should be submitted, and provides guidance throughout the process. For the PYP and the MYP, the regional office contacts the school at least 12 months before the programme evaluation visit is due, engages in a dialogue with the school regarding dates and specific arrangements for the visit, and provides guidance throughout the process.

The self-study (PYP, MYP, Diploma Programme)

1. The self-study questionnaire is available as a Word document and must be completed electronically. The school can access the *Guide to programme evaluation* (this document) and the *Programme evaluation self-study questionnaire* on:
 - IBNET
 - the online curriculum centre (OCC)
 - the regional pages of the IBO public website (www.ibo.org).
2. The school embarks on a process of self-study, to which all those involved in the organization and the implementation of the programme should contribute (board members, administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff, students, parents). This process is guided by the detailed self-study questionnaire and involves looking at all aspects of school life that are affected by the programme.
3. As directed by the regional office, the school forwards the completed self-study questionnaire and all supporting documentation in the required format and by the required deadline.

The Diploma Programme

- Schools should refer to the regulations contained in the *Vade Mecum* when they respond to specific items in the questionnaire.
- The regional office will provide the school with a summary table of the numbers of diploma students and their examination results over the last five years. This table is intended as additional information to help the school consider trends and set goals for the future.

The school visit (PYP and MYP)

1. The regional office notifies the school about the planned dates for the programme evaluation visit, and advises the school how to access the *Programme evaluation self-study questionnaire*.
2. While the school engages in the process of self-study in preparation for the visit, the IBO designates a team of evaluators with a minimum of two members. The school is provided with the names and contact details of the evaluators about three months before the visit, and asked to organize single-room accommodation for each team member for the duration of the visit.
3. The school forwards the required number of copies of the completed *Programme evaluation self-study questionnaire*, and all supporting documentation, to the regional office and members of the evaluation team at least two months before the visit. The regional office will instruct the school on how the self-study questionnaire and supporting documentation should be submitted.

4. The school proposes a draft agenda for the visit. The school is expected to plan this agenda according to the directions provided, and taking into consideration the school's special circumstances (for example, the size of the school, the duration of the visit, the organization of the PYP/MYP). The regional office will confirm the school's proposed agenda or request modifications.
5. The visit normally lasts two to three days, depending on the size of the school. Where schools are in partnership with other schools, the visit may take longer.

Monitoring of assessment (MYP only)

Guidelines regarding monitoring of assessment are provided in the *MYP coordinator's handbook*. Samples of student work should reach IBCA **at least eight months** before the programme evaluation visit.

The evaluation report (PYP, MYP, Diploma Programme)

For the PYP and the MYP, the programme evaluation report, written by the programme evaluation team, is sent to the regional office within four weeks of the school visit. Diploma Programme evaluation reports are completed at set times during the year by a team of experienced Diploma Programme practitioners, and are then sent to the regional office.

The central purpose of the evaluation report is to provide a basis for further development. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in the school's implementation of the programme in terms of the programme standards and practices, and includes commendations, recommendations and, where appropriate, matters to be addressed. The evaluation report follows the same structure as the self-study questionnaire.

Final commendations, recommendations and any matters to be addressed are expressed in the regional director's official letter to the head of school, which accompanies the report. The head of school is responsible for making the contents of the programme evaluation report known within the school.

The school is expected to respond to the recommendations and matters to be addressed contained in the programme evaluation report, within the time specified by the regional office. Where relevant, further action and visits may be needed.

The self-study

In many ways the self-study can be considered the most crucial part of the whole process of programme evaluation. It is supported by the document *Programme evaluation self-study questionnaire*, which accompanies this guide. The self-study should be carefully planned over 6–12 months and should involve consideration of all aspects of the implementation of the programme, as well as discussions with all the key people in the school. Experience has shown that schools have found this internal self-assessment of the implementation of the programme to be the source of new dynamism and momentum within the school, as well as an opportunity to pause and reflect honestly on the strengths and weaknesses of the school's programme. It has also proved to be an opportunity for increased communication within the school.

1. The educational leadership team, including the programme coordinator, should establish a timetable and process to ensure that the self-study will be completed well ahead of the deadline for submission of the questionnaire and supporting documentation, as directed by the regional office.
2. It is very important to reserve significant formal meeting time to carry out this self-evaluation process. Such time must be planned in advance to allow for reflection, discussion and the collating of evidence to proceed in an effective, meaningful way.
3. The self-study should draw on existing school documentation and reflect actual practice in the school. A list of supporting documentation to be submitted at the same time as the completed questionnaire is supplied in the next section of this guide. For the PYP and the MYP, any additional supporting evidence needs to be available to the visiting team at the time of the visit.
4. The school principal is responsible for completing the final "Summary of main conclusions" at the end of the questionnaire. This statement should present an honest, broad view of the reality of the school's situation rather than the views of any minority groups within the school community.
5. If there is a director/head of school in addition to the school principal, they must add their summary comments at the end of the self-study questionnaire.
6. The team of evaluators will examine the completed self-study questionnaire and supporting documentation. In the case of the PYP and the MYP, this will take place before the school visit. Comments and conclusions drawn from the self-study will guide evaluators in their discussions and in the writing of the report.

Supporting documentation for the evaluation of the PYP

Copies of the following documents should be sent to the regional office at the same time as the completed self-study questionnaire, in the format required by the regional office.

School presentation

1. A description of the time line and the process for completing the self-study questionnaire from the head of school, including how parents/students/teachers were involved
2. A diagram of the management, teaching and administrative structures of the school, showing the lines of responsibility
3. A list of the members of the governing body of the school
4. A plan of the school and a general description of the facilities
5. A summary report on how recommendations from the authorization visit or from the previous evaluation of the programme have been addressed

Section A: philosophy

1. The current educational philosophy or mission statement of the school, the date of its adoption, a description of the process used for its review, and how it is promoted within the school
2. An up-to-date school brochure and/or prospectus submitted to parents, with clear reference to the place of the PYP within the school

Section B: organization

1. All appendices at the end of the self-study questionnaire
2. A diagram of the organizational structures within the school that support the implementation of the programme, showing lines of responsibility and accountability (if different from the diagram submitted as item 2 in “School presentation”)
3. Copies of all class/grade level schedules
4. The job description of the PYP coordinator
5. A list of staff members who have received training as IB workshop leaders or school visitors, and/or who have participated in IB curricular development

Section C: curriculum

1. A description of school services such as counselling, support for special educational needs or language support
2. Documents used to inform parents about the curriculum
3. The school’s language policy document, including related practices
4. The school’s assessment policy document, including related practices
5. Samples of report cards
6. The subject-specific scope and sequence documents, if different from those supplied by the PYP department at IBCA
7. The transdisciplinary programme of inquiry and all corresponding unit planners

Section D: the student

1. A copy of guidelines given to students about participation in the PYP exhibition
2. A brief description of the current and/or previous years’ PYP exhibition(s)
3. A copy of any student code of conduct/behaviour

Supporting documentation for the evaluation of the MYP

Copies of the following documents should be sent to the regional office at the same time as the completed self-study questionnaire, in the format required by the regional offices.

School presentation

1. A description of the time line and the process for completing the self-study questionnaire from the head of school, including how parents/students/teachers were involved
2. A diagram of the management, teaching and administrative structures of the school, showing the lines of responsibility
3. A list of the members of the governing body of the school
4. A plan of the school and a general description of the facilities
5. A summary report on how recommendations from the authorization visit or from the previous evaluation of the programme have been addressed

Section A: philosophy

1. The current educational philosophy or mission statement of the school, the date of its adoption, a description of the process used for its review, and how it is promoted within the school
2. An up-to-date school brochure and/or prospectus submitted to parents, with clear reference to the place of the MYP within the school

Section B: organization

1. All appendices at the end of the self-study questionnaire
2. A diagram of the organizational structures within the school to support the implementation of the programme, showing lines of responsibility and accountability (if different from the diagram submitted as item 2 in “School presentation”)
3. The job description of the MYP coordinator
4. A list of staff members who have received training as IB workshop leaders, school visitors and/or who have participated in IB curricular development

Section C: curriculum

1. A description of school services such as counselling, support for special educational needs or language support
2. Documents used to inform parents about the curriculum
3. The school’s language policy document, including related practices
4. The school’s assessment policy document, including related practices
5. The course outline for each subject group, clearly identifying how the school intends to develop the curriculum for all MYP students, and the criteria used in assessment
6. A summary document providing an overview of the implementation of each area of interaction over the whole programme, with reference to subject groups and specific projects
7. Statements describing the policies regarding the placement and promotion of students in instructional groups
8. For each subject group, examples of units of work showing focus through the areas of interaction

Note

*For schools **not** requesting moderation of assessment and validation of grades by the IBO:* Samples of assessed student work in **at least one subject for each subject group** and **the personal project**, organized according to the guidelines provided in the *MYP coordinator's handbook*, should have been submitted to IBCA within the last two years, and **at least eight months** before the visit.

Section D: the student

1. A full description of how the personal project is organized and managed in the school, to include: the structure in place to ensure coordination of the project; how students and supervisors are briefed; the process for standardization of assessment; the time line for completion of the personal project
2. A copy of guidelines given to students about the completion of the personal project
3. A list of the current or previous year's personal projects, indicating the type of projects involved

Supporting documentation for the evaluation of the Diploma Programme

Copies of the following documents should be sent to the regional office at the same time as the completed self-study questionnaire, in the format required by the regional office.

School presentation

1. A description of the timeline and the process for completing the self-study questionnaire from the head of school, including how parents/students/teachers were involved
2. A diagram of the management, teaching and administrative structures of the school, showing the lines of responsibility
3. A list of the members of the governing body of the school
4. A plan of the school and a general description of the facilities
5. A summary report on how recommendations from the authorization visit or from the previous evaluation of the programme have been addressed

Section A: philosophy

1. The current educational philosophy or mission statement of the school, the date of its adoption, a description of the process used for its review, and how it is promoted within the school
2. An up-to-date school brochure and/or prospectus submitted to parents, with clear reference to the place of the Diploma Programme within the school

Section B: organization

1. All appendices at the end of the self-study questionnaire
2. A diagram of the organizational structures within the school that support the implementation of the programme, showing lines of responsibility and accountability (if different from the diagram submitted as item 2 in “School presentation”)
3. The job description of the Diploma Programme coordinator
4. A copy of the timetable/schedule, including an explanation of the time allocation for higher level (HL) and standard level (SL) subjects, per week or per cycle of the schedule
5. A management and staff profile including the number of years in the current post and, where applicable, any experience gained in similar positions in other schools
6. A calendar of school deadlines for internally assessed (IA) work
7. A list of staff who are IB examiners, moderators or workshop leaders, and/or who have been involved in IB curricular development

Section C: curriculum

1. A description of school services such as counselling, support for special educational needs or language support
2. Documents used to inform parents about the curriculum
3. The school’s language policy document, including related practices
4. The school’s assessment policy document, including related practices
5. A set of any publications about the Diploma Programme that is sent out by the school to students and/or parents
6. Annual analyses and reflections on students’ results

Section D: the student

1. A description of how the extended essay is organized and managed

The programme evaluation visit for the PYP and the MYP

The school visit by IBO-appointed evaluators is a mandatory part of programme evaluation and is organized by the regional office of the IBO. It takes place at a mutually agreed time, and lasts at least two to three days, depending on the size of the school. Where schools are in partnership with other schools, the visit may take longer.

The team of evaluators will be nominated by the IBO and may or may not include full-time members of IBO staff. The team will normally include at least one experienced PYP/MYP school practitioner, identified and trained in programme evaluation by the IBO. The cost of travel, accommodation and subsistence for the evaluators will be borne by the school, which will also be charged a programme evaluation fee. For further information please contact your IBO regional office.

The school will be asked to submit a proposed agenda to the regional office at the same time as the completed self-study questionnaire is submitted. The final agenda for the programme evaluation visit will be arranged by mutual agreement between the IBO, the evaluators and the school. In constructing the final agenda, consideration will be given to the completed self-study questionnaire returned by the school in advance of the programme evaluation visit. Items for inclusion in the agenda will allow the evaluators to gather sufficient information to write their report. The details of the agenda will then be confirmed with the school before the visit.

The focus of the visit will be group interviews with those in the school responsible for developing and implementing the programme, and with students participating in the programme. Parents and governors may also be interviewed. The visit will include interviews with the head of school, the principal, and the PYP/MYP coordinator as appropriate, in order to confirm any last-minute arrangements for the visit and to obtain an overview of the self-study process in the school.

Evaluators will also make visits to some classrooms as part of the programme evaluation process; it is unlikely that evaluators will visit the classes of all teachers. These visits should be kept short and allow for spontaneous exchanges with students. The agenda should also include a tour of the school facilities and the opportunity to review examples of student work. A workroom should be set aside for the evaluating team for the duration of the visit.

The programme evaluation visit agenda

The list below should be used as guidance when drawing up the agenda for the programme evaluation visit.

1. Formal interviews with the head, principal, PYP/MYP coordinator, governors, school board representatives and parent representatives
2. Formal interviews with teachers in their self-study groups (PYP)/subject groups (MYP)
3. Dialogue with:
 - year level and/or subject group coordinators, as appropriate
 - students
 - parents
 - administrators
 - library/media centre staff
 - non-teaching professional staff
4. Visits to school facilities:
 - any specialist teaching areas such as the gymnasium/art room etc
 - library/media centre
 - outdoor play facilities (PYP)
 - science labs (MYP)
5. Observation of student learning
6. Dialogue relating to the PYP exhibition/the MYP personal project with:
 - students
 - mentors/supervisors
 - PYP/MYP coordinator
7. Dialogue relating to the MYP areas of interaction with:
 - subject group leaders
 - areas of interaction leaders
 - MYP coordinator
8. Opportunities to see a variety of samples of student work and to talk to those involved
9. Towards the end of the visit: time for the visiting team to consolidate their findings prior to the exit meeting; time for the exit meeting during which a verbal report is made to the school administration about the team's initial impressions, recommendations and commendations (allow at least 60 minutes); the opportunity to say goodbye and thank the staff

The programme evaluation report

The programme evaluation report for the PYP/MYP will be written by a nominated member of the programme evaluation team within four weeks of the programme evaluation visit. A copy of the draft report will be sent first to the team members, and then forwarded to the appropriate IBO regional office.

The evaluation report for the Diploma Programme will be written by a member of the IBO regional staff after discussion with a team of experienced Diploma Programme practitioners.

Guidelines are given to evaluators for the writing of reports, using clearly defined criteria. The report will follow the structure of the self-study questionnaire, and will deal with the evaluators' findings in each area of the school's delivery of the programme, based on the completed questionnaire, the supporting documentation and, for the PYP and the MYP, the visit itself. The following structure will be used.

- **Introduction and school presentation**
- **Section A: philosophy**
- **Section B: organization**
- **Section C: curriculum**
- **Section D: the student**
- **Summary of main conclusions and matters to be addressed, if relevant**

The report will be based on the school's own answers to the self-study questionnaire and the descriptive statements; however, the evaluators will be expected to comment on any perceived inconsistencies. Each section of the report will include some commendations and recommendations, and, where appropriate, matters to be addressed, which will form the basis for the main conclusions listed at the end of the report.

The programme evaluation report represents the outcome of an important process for the school and the IBO's evaluating team. It must therefore provide sufficient detail and advice to be used by the school in the further development of its programme over the next five years. It must also outline clearly any action that the school may have to take to respond to the matters to be addressed and the recommendations, and state the deadline for responses by the school, if relevant.

The regional director will send the head of school the final report with an official letter outlining the matters to be addressed if relevant. The head of school is obliged to make the contents of the report known within the school.

Subsequent procedures

The programme evaluation report will specify a date by which the school is expected to send the regional office an action plan in response to the recommendations and matters to be addressed contained in the programme evaluation report. Subsequently, the school will send the regional office progress reports at specified times, depending on the recommendations and matters to be addressed.

Where considered necessary, and indicated in the programme evaluation report, a follow-up visit (or in the case of the Diploma Programme, a first visit) by one or more representatives of the regional office may be scheduled in the months following the production of the school's progress report.

Where there is cause for serious concern, further actions and visits may be necessary. Please see the *Rules for Authorized Schools, Article 10*.

Summary of the programme evaluation procedures for the PYP and the MYP

Who	Action	Time
1. Regional office	notifies the school of the forthcoming visit and how to access the <i>Programme evaluation self-study questionnaire</i>	at least 12 months before the programme evaluation visit
2. School (MYP only)	submits samples of student work for moderation or monitoring of assessment	no earlier than 2 years but no later than 8 months before the visit
3. Regional office	submits the names of the evaluators to the school	3 months before the visit
4. School	submits the required number of copies of the self-study questionnaire and supporting documentation to the regional office, in the required format	2 months before the visit
5. School	proposes a draft agenda for the visit	2 months before the visit
6. School	finalizes the agenda	1 month before the visit
7. Liaison between the regional office and the school	PROGRAMME EVALUATION VISIT	
8. IBO evaluators	send the first draft of the evaluation report to the regional office	1 month after the visit
9. Regional director	sends the final evaluation report to the head of school, with a list of the commendations, recommendation and matters to be addressed, if relevant	2½ months after the visit
10. School	sends an action plan to the regional office on the recommendations and matters to be addressed, if relevant	as specified in the programme evaluation report

Summary of the programme evaluation procedures for the Diploma Programme

Who	Action	Time
1. Regional office	notifies the school of the forthcoming programme evaluation and how to access the <i>Programme evaluation self-study questionnaire</i>	at least 10–12 months before the submission of the <i>Programme evaluation self-study questionnaire</i>
2. Regional office	provides a summary table of the numbers of diploma students and their examination results for the last 5 years	at least 10 months before the submission of the <i>Programme evaluation self-study questionnaire</i>
3. School	submits the required number of copies of the self-study questionnaire and supporting documentation to the regional office, in the required format	at least 10–12 months after notification of evaluation
4. IBO evaluators	send the evaluation report to the regional office	approximately 2 months after the school's submission of the <i>Programme evaluation self-study questionnaire</i>
5. Regional director	sends the final report to the head of school, with a list of the commendations, recommendations and matters to be addressed, if relevant	approximately 3 months after the school's submission of the <i>Programme evaluation self-study questionnaire</i>
6. School	sends an action plan to the regional office on the recommendations and matters to be addressed, if relevant	as specified in the programme evaluation report